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# Pollard pleads guilty to espionage

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Johnathan Jay Pollard yesterday pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court to reduced charges of espionage, in return for providing government prosecutors with intricate details of what was described as a highly organized and well-financed Israeli spy operation of which he was a part.

Minutes later, his wife, Anne Henderson-Pollard, also pleaded guilty to lesser charges as part of a delicate, three-way deal crafted over the last six months between lawyers for the couple and officials at the Justice and State departments.

After the 40-minute hearing before U.S. District Judge Aubrey E. Robinson Jr., Justice officials released documents revealing in riveting detail how the spy operation delivered classified U.S. materials into the hands of Israeli officials.

The court papers show how the spy ring worked and how Pollard's espionage activities led him to at least five Israeli officials and took him to Paris and the Middle East.

The documents name four Israeli citizens as unindicted co-conspirators, including an Air Force colonel and an Israeli Embassy secretary not previously associated with the case.

"The investigation is continuing, and whenever an investigation continues, that means there may be other indictments," U.S. Attorney Joseph DiGenova told reporters who gathered on the front steps of the court house. He said that Attorney General Edwin Meese has told him to press forward with the investigation.

An Israeli Embassy spokesman declined comment on the pleas and reiterated a statement issued last week that denied the spy operation was widespread and repeated Israel's commitment to help U.S. officials investigate the matter.

Dressed in a gray suit, white shirt and black tie, Pollard pleaded guilty

in a subdued voice to one count of conspiring to deliver national defense information to a foreign government.

Pollard, 31, a former civilian anti-terrorist expert with the Naval Investigative Service in Suitland, Md., could have received a maximum of life imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine for the offense.

But the government, as part of the plea-bargain agreement, waived its right to ask for a life sentence.

As her husband watched, Mrs. Henderson-Pollard, 26, pleaded guilty to being an accessory after the fact to possession of national defense documents and to conspiring to receive embezzled government property.

Together, the offenses carry a maximum penalty of 10 years imprisonment and a \$500,000 fine. Mrs. Henderson-Pollard, released in March on \$23,500 bail, remains free.

Judge Robinson did not set a sentencing date for the pair.

The couple, arrested Nov. 21 outside the Israeli Embassy during an unsuccessful attempt to gain political asylum, must continue cooperating with investigators and testify if asked as part of the plea-bargain agreement.

While court documents show that Pollard initiated meetings with Israeli officials about spying and received more than \$45,000 for the information he gave them, "at no time did he ever believe he was acting contrary to the interests of the U.S.," said his attorney, Richard Hibey.

Pollard "also believed in the Israeli state and believed the information would help them in their war against terrorism," Mr. Hibey said.

Mrs. Henderson-Pollard received and read classified documents — obtained by her husband — relating to the People's Republic of China in preparation for a business meeting with PRC officials, but "she did not personally deliver or disclose any national defense information to a foreign national," according to one court document.

Pollard, using a special courier card that allowed him to leave work without being searched, as often as three times a week took classified documents to his car, where a special briefcase awaited. Sometimes he would drive through a car wash to obscure the transfer of documents into the briefcase.

He delivered the papers every two weeks to the apartment of Irit Erb, a secretary at the Israeli Embassy who has not previously been named

in the case, but who fled to Israel the day before Pollard's arrest by the FBI.

In a second apartment in the same building, Pollard met on the last Saturday of every month with Joseph "Yassi" Yagur, his Israeli handler. Mr. Yagur left the country the day after Pollard was arrested.

Mr. Yagur paid Pollard for the information, told him how it was being used by the Israeli government, and "tasked" him on specific classified information the Israelis were interested in. Meanwhile, others in the same apartment would copy classified papers Pollard had brought.

Pollard, who analyzed potential terrorist threats in the Caribbean and United States, brought documents with esoteric names like "Soviet/Warsaw Pact Heliborne Jamming Threat to NATO" and "The Naval Forces [of certain countries]."

The documents, many of them from the Defense Intelligence Agency, bore classifications such as "Secret," "No Foreign" — meaning they were off limits to foreigners, even allies — and "WNINTEL" — meaning disclosure of the documents could jeopardize intelligence sources and methods.

Pollard's espionage took him to Paris in November 1984, where the Israelis bought his wife a diamond-and-sapphire ring, and to Israel in July 1985. Later that year, he was given a false Israeli passport in the name "Danny Cohen" and told \$30,000 had been deposited in a foreign bank account in that name — the first of 10 yearly payments.

According to the court papers, Pollard and the Israelis set up elaborate procedures to contact each other and to alert the others if the ring was detected.

Other Israeli contacts included Israeli Air Force Colonel Aviem "Avi" Sella, who has not previously been named in the case; Rafi Eitan, an Israeli intelligence official named as the head of the operation; and another Israeli identified as "Uzi."

Mr. DiGenova, who was among U.S. officials who visited Israel last December as part of the investigation, declined to say whether the spy operation was authorized at the top levels of the Israeli government.

"We are not saying one way or the other," he said. "That question remains open."